

OPTICAL DEVICE PACKAGE FOR FLIP-CHIP MOUNTING

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application claims priority to U.S. provisional application Serial No. 60/255,865 filed December 14, 2000.

BACKGROUND

1. Technical Field

The present disclosure relates to a package for optical devices, and particularly to a module for operatively coupling one or more optical fibers with one or more optical devices.

2. Description of the Related Art

Various optical devices are known in the art and include such semiconductor devices as light emitting diodes (LEDs), laser diodes, and photodetectors. Optical semiconductors, i.e., optoelectronic devices, effect a conversion between optical signals and electronic signals.

Optical semiconductor devices are sensitive to environmental conditions and are generally sealed in

hermetic packages or in plastic molding to prevent degradation caused by atmospheric contaminants such as humidity, dust, and free ions. The optical input/output surfaces of the components operatively coupled in a package are especially susceptible to contamination, hence, the desirability of hermetically sealing the package to prevent contact with the outside atmosphere. Hermetic sealing typically involves mounting a cap to a substrate having an optical semiconductor device by means of soldering, welding, and the like.

One prior known optical semiconductor module includes a submount body having a groove buried with an insulator, an optical semiconductor device mounted on the submount body, a cap arranged across the groove and fixedly bonded to the submount body by a bonding member for hermetically sealing the module. An electrical wiring layer connected to the semiconductor device extends to the outside of the cap through a groove buried with an insulator.

Surface mounting technology is often employed to keep the package for an integrated circuit as compact as possible by eliminating certain parts which are unnecessary for the operation of the semiconductor.

In one type of surface mounting technology the bottom surface of a semiconductor device is attached to the top surface of the package substrate. Electrical connections are made between the bonding pads on the top surface of the semiconductor device and the contacts on the mounting surface. The electrical connections are typically made by bonding thin gold or gold alloy wire from the device bonding pads to the electrical connections on the surface. The substrate of the ball grid array package has solder balls on its bottom surface opposite the semiconductor device. Disposed in a grid array, the solder balls are used to make contact with a circuit board. Inside the package are conductive traces which electrically connect the solder balls to the contacts on the top surface of the substrate where the semiconductor device is attached.

However, this method has disadvantages. Wire bonds have high parasitic inductance and are poor conductors of high speed signals, they are labor intensive to manufacture, and are not mechanically robust.

Another mounting method employs a flip-chip. A flip-chip has spaced apart bonding pads disposed on the

top surface of the chip rather than just at the
periphery. A corresponding array of solder mounting
bumps is disposed on the top surface of the substrate
onto which the chip is to be mounted. However, the array
of bonding pads on the flip-chip and the array of bonding
pads on the mounting surface are mirror images of each
other. The chip is flipped over so that the individual
solder bumps on the chip contact the corresponding solder
bumps on the surface of the substrate. The flip-chip is
then secured to the surface of the substrate by fusing
the solder contacts. By eliminating the wire bonds a
package designed for a flip-chip reduces the inductance
between the semiconductor device and the substrate.
Since the flip-chips have bonding pads arrayed on the
entire top surface of the semiconductor device it can
have far more bonding pads than a wire bonded chip.

While flip-chip technology is known for
mounting semiconductor chips to the surface of a
substrate within a package, there is yet need for an
optoelectronic device package which can be flip-chip
mounted to a circuit board or other mounting platform.

SUMMARY

5 An optical device package is provided herein
which can be flip mounted to a platform. More
particularly the optical device package includes a
substrate having an upper surface, an optical fiber
mounted to the substrate, and a frame mounted to the
upper surface of the substrate. The frame has at least
one conductive pathway extending between a top surface of
the frame and a bottom surface of the frame. The optical
device package further includes contact means disposed on
the top surface of the frame for flip mounting the
optical device package to a platform. Trace means for
communicating an electrical signal between the conductive
pathway of the frame and an optical semiconductor
component are disposed on the upper major surface of the
substrate. Preferably, the optical device package
includes a lid to provide a hermetically sealed enclosure
for the optical semiconductor component and at least a
portion of the optical fiber.

20 The optical device package described herein
advantageously provides a flip-chip type mounting
capability, thereby reducing the possibility of parasitic

inductance and facilitating the transfer of high speed signals.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Various embodiments are described below with reference to the drawings wherein:

FIG. 1A is an exploded perspective view of an optical device package in accordance with this disclosure;

FIG. 1B is a perspective view showing the optical fiber disposed through a ferrule;

FIG. 2 is a diagrammatic side view of the optical device package;

FIG. 3 is diagrammatic side view illustrating an alternative embodiment of the optical device package;

FIG. 4 is a diagrammatic side view illustrating another alternative embodiment of the optical device package.

FIG. 5 is a diagrammatic side view illustrating yet another alternative embodiment of the optical device package in accordance with this disclosure employing a lid mounted directly to the substrate;

FIG. 6 is a perspective view of a lid for use in conjunction with the embodiment of the optical device package illustrated in FIG. 5;

FIG. 7 is a perspective view illustrating a U-shaped frame in conjunction with a substrate, optical fiber and optical semiconductor component; and,

FIG. 8 is a perspective view illustrating the flip chip mounting of the optical device package according to the disclosure herein to a circuit board.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENT(S)

Referring now to FIGS. 1A and 2, the optical device package 100 includes a substrate 110 in conjunction with an optical fiber stub 130, and optical semiconductor component 140, a frame 120, and preferably also a lid 150.

More particularly, substrate 110 can be made from any material suitable for providing an optical bench. A preferred material for fabricating substrate 110 is silicon. Other suitable materials include ceramic, polymers, and metal. Substrate 110 has a distal end 111, a proximal end 112, and a horizontal upper major

surface 116. Substrate 110 is formed by etching and/or cutting or other suitable method to provide a notch 113 extending longitudinally for receiving the optical fiber stub 130, and a lateral groove 114 for providing a distally facing stop surface 115. Lateral groove 114 and stop surface 115, represented in phantom illustration, are optional features. Notch 113 preferably has a V-shaped cross-section and is typically referred to as a "V-groove," although other cross sectional configurations such as U-shaped cross sections are also contemplated. Preferably, substrate 110 is (100) single crystal silicon. The upper surface 116 can be masked and selectively etched to form angled surfaces 113a and 113b (FIG. 2) of the V-shaped notch 113 in the (111) crystallographic planes. The lateral groove 114 can be formed by cutting the upper surface 116 with a dicing saw. The depth of V-shaped notch 113 and lateral groove 114 can be any suitable depth for accommodating the optical fiber 130, and preferably range from about 50 microns to about 500 microns.

The optical fiber 130 can extend beyond distal edge 111 of the substrate. Alternatively, as shown in phantom illustration, substrate 110' and V-shaped groove

113' can be extended such that the distal edge 111' of substrate 110' extends distally further than the distal end of the optical fiber 130.

Optical fiber stub 130 can be any conventional optical fiber and is typically from about 1 mm to about 5 mm in length, although lengths outside of this range can also be employed when suitable. Optical fiber 130 typically has a diameter of about 125 microns (standard). However, larger or smaller diameters can also be used when suitable. Alternatively, as shown in FIG. 1B the optical fiber 130 can be disposed through a ferrule 130A, the ferrule being disposed between the substrate 110 and frame 120

The optical fiber 130 is optionally mounted in longitudinal V-shaped notch 113 such that the proximal end of the optical fiber abuts the distally facing stop surface 115 of the optional lateral groove 114.

The optical semiconductor component 140 is preferably mounted on the upper surface 116 of the substrate and can be any suitable semiconductor device for emitting or receiving light such as, for example, a laser diode, light emitting diode (LED), or a

photodetector. Such optical semiconductor devices are well known in the art.

5 A significant feature of the optical device package 100 is that it can be flip-chip mounted to, for example, a circuit board or other mounting platform. The flip-chip mounting ability is facilitated by the frame 120, which is a structural frame distinct from the lid 150 (described below) and which serves as a support for the optical device package when flipped over for mounting to a platform.

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Frame 120 is preferably a single piece member having a top surface 122, an interior ledge 124, and a recess 125 configured and dimensioned to accommodate optical fiber 130. Frame 120 preferably has a band-like shape, i.e., frame 120 circumscribes an open area 123, and can be quadrilateral in shape, circular, oval, triangular and the like. Frame 120 is preferably fabricated from a ceramic, glass, silicon, or other suitable material which does not plastically deform at the temperatures used to process and fabricate the present optical device package. Frame 120 can be of any suitable dimensions and preferably has a thickness D-1 of from about 100 microns to about 1,000 microns.

Frame 120 is fixedly bonded to the upper surface 116 of the substrate such that the optical semiconductor device 140 and at least a portion of the optical fiber 130 are disposed within opening 123.

5 Bonding of frame 120 to substrate 110 can be achieved by any suitable means such as soldering with metal, bonding with solder glass frit or BCB (benzocyclobutene resin), or adhesives such as epoxy resins, etc.

10 Solder glass frit is a low melting point glass such as borate glass, lead zinc borate glass, and the like. Generally, solder glass frit can have a melting point of about 300°C to about 800°C. Solder glass frit suitable for securing the frame to the substrate is commercially available, for example, from Schott Glass Technologies of Duryea, PA.

15 Frame 120 can be metallized or roughened, if necessary, to facilitate soldering or bonding. The portions of the lateral groove 114 beneath the frame can be sealed with a gap filling bonding material (e.g.,
20 solder glass frit, epoxy resin, etc.) to provide an hermetically sealed enclosure for the optical semiconductor device if desired.

While the optical device package need not be hermetically sealed in order to function, it is advantageous for the internal components of the optical device package to be secured within an hermetically sealed enclosure to avoid deterioration caused by environmental contaminants such as humidity, dust, corrosive vapors and the like. Therefore, optical device package 100 preferably includes a lid 150 bonded to frame 120 to form an enclosure defined by the substrate 110, frame 120 and lid 150. The optical semiconductor device 140, at least part of the optical fiber 130, and other optional electronic components are contained within the enclosure.

Lid 150 is a flat plate fabricated from any suitable fluid impervious material such as silicon, glass, ceramic, metal, and the like. Lid 150 can be bonded to frame 120 with a bonding material such as solder metal, solder glass frit, adhesives such as epoxy, BCB, and the like.

As can be seen from FIG. 2, lid 150 is positioned on and bonded to the surface of interior ledge 124 of frame 120. The surface of interior ledge 124 can be metallized or roughened to facilitate bonding by

solder glass, solder metal, epoxy resin, BCB, and the like. The top surface 151 of the lid is preferably below the level of the top surface 122 of the frame by a distance D-2, wherein D-2 can range from about 5 microns to 250 microns, preferably 10 microns to 200 microns, and more preferably 20 microns to 100 microns.

In order for optical device package 100 to achieve the flip-chip mounting capability, electrically conductive vias 160 are incorporated into frame 120. As can be seen from FIG. 2, frame 120 includes at least one and preferably two or more vertical vias 160, each terminating in a bonding pad, i.e. solder ball 162, disposed on top surface 122. The vias 160 are fabricated from conductive metal and are incorporated into the frame 120 when frame 120 is in a malleable, unhardened state. For example, in a preferred embodiment, frame 120 is fabricated from "green sheets" of ceramic precursor such as alumina, aluminum nitride, silicon nitride, and the like. The green sheets are flexible and easily processed. Holes are punched in the green sheets where interlayer connections or vias are required. Conductive paste can be applied to the sheets to form conductive paths. The holes are filled with conductive paste to

form conductive vias and the sheets are stacked and laminated. The laminated stack of green sheets is then fired at a suitably high temperature to form a solid ceramic structure.

5 In the use of high temperature fired ceramics, the conductive paste can include refractory metals such as tungsten or molybdenum-manganese alloy. In the case of low temperature fired ceramics, the conductive paste can include copper, silver, and/or gold.

10 Conductive traces 161 preferably are metal films disposed on the upper surface 116 of the substrate. Frame 120 is positioned on the upper surface 116 of the substrate such that the conductive traces 161 are in contact with respective vias 160. The optical
15 semiconductor component 140 is positioned on upper surface 116 of the substrate in contact with the conductive traces 161. The conductive traces 161 form a wiring pattern and can be fabricated, for example, as metal films by masking and vapor deposition, or any other
20 suitable method. As can be seen, the conductive traces 161, conductive vias 160, and solder ball contacts 162 form an electrically conductive path to allow electrical communication between the optical semiconductor component

140 and an electrical circuit outside the optical device package 100.

Referring now to FIG. 3, an alternative embodiment 200 is illustrated. Optical device package 200 includes a substrate 210 having a longitudinal V-shaped notch 213 in which an optical fiber 230 is mounted. The optical fiber 230 is operatively aligned with optical semiconductor component 240. A lid 250 is mounted to frame 220.

Frame 220 is secured to the upper surface of substrate 210 by a bonding agent 205 such as solder metal, solder glass, epoxy resin, BCB, and the like. Frame 220 includes one or more solder balls 262 positioned on the upper surface thereof, one or more conductive vias 260 extending vertically downward from the solder balls 262 through the frame, lateral conductive paths 263 extending inward from the respective vias 260, and vertical conductive paths 264 extending vertically along the inside surface of the frame 220 which at least partially defines the interior enclosure in which the optical semiconductor component 240 is mounted. Conductive traces 261 extend from the vertical paths 264 laterally across the upper surface of the

substrate 210 to effect electrical communication with the optical semiconductor component 140. As compared with conductive traces 161, traces 261 are narrower and do not need to extend beneath the frame 220.

5 Referring now to FIG. 4, an embodiment 300 of the optical device package is shown which includes a substrate 310, with longitudinal V-shaped notch 313, an optical fiber 330 mounted within notch 313, an optical semiconductor component 340, and a lid 350 mounted to frame 320. Unlike previously described embodiment 100 as illustrated in FIG. 2, the top surface 351 of lid 350 is higher than the upper surface 321 of frame 320 by a distance D-3. Distance D-3 can range from about 5 microns to 250 microns, preferably 10 microns to 200 microns, and more preferably 20 microns to 100 microns. The elevated position of lid 350 allows lid 350 to function as a heat sink path. Nevertheless, as shown in FIG. 4, the top of the solder balls 362 is at a level higher than the level of the upper surface 351 of the lid by a distance D-4, wherein D-4 can range from about 5 microns to 250 microns, preferably 10 microns to 200 microns, and more preferably 20 microns to 100 microns.

Also, as exemplified in FIG. 4, the conductive pathways associated with frame of any of the embodiments described herein do not necessarily have to extend through the interior of the frame. For example, conductive pathways 363 extend along the exterior surfaces of the frame 320, i.e., along the top surface 321, side surface 323 and bottom surface 324. Electrically conductive traces 364 extend along the upper surface 311 of substrate 310 and provide electrical contact between the conductive pathways 363 and the optical semiconductor component 340, which is mounted to the conductive traces 364.

Referring now to FIG. 5, an alternative embodiment 400 of the optical device package is shown which includes a substrate 410 having a longitudinal V-shaped notch 413, an optical fiber 430 disposed in the notch 413, an optical semiconductor component 440, a frame 420, and a lid 450. However, unlike previously described embodiments, lid 450 is not mounted to frame 420, but rather is sealed directly to the upper surface 416 of substrate 410 with a sealing agent such as described above. Frame 420 includes one or more solder balls 462 on the upper surface thereof, and conductive

vias 460. The solder balls 462 are positioned higher than the top surface of lid 450 so that when optical device package 400 is flipped over for mounting to a circuit board or other type platform the solder balls make contact with corresponding bonding pads on the surface to which the optical device package 400 is mounted. Conductive traces 461 extend along the upper surface of the substrate 410 to make an electrical path between the bottom of the conductive vias 460 and the optical semiconductor component 440.

Referring now to FIG. 6, lid 450 includes a recess 451 to accommodate the optical semiconductor component 440, and a longitudinal notch 452 to engage the optical fiber 430. Lid 450, in conjunction with substrate 410, forms an hermetically sealed enclosure. Frame 420 does not form part of the enclosure, but with vias 460 enables the optical device package 400 to flip mount to a circuit board.

Referring now to FIG. 7, a semiconductor device package 500 includes a substrate 510 having a longitudinal V-shaped notch 513 in which optical fiber 530 is fixedly mounted. Optical semiconductor component 540 is mounted to the upper surface 516 of the substrate

proximal of the lateral groove 514. In contrast to quadrilateral shaped frames, such as frame 120 illustrated in FIG. 1A, frame 520 is generally U-shaped, including a proximal back portion 522 and leg portions 523a and 523b extending distally from back portion 522.

To achieve an hermetically sealed enclosure, if desired, lid 450 as illustrated in FIG. 6 can optionally be employed in optical device package 500 by being mounted directly to the upper major surface 516 of the substrate between leg portions 523a and 523b of the frame.

Frame 520 includes one or more solder balls 561 disposed on the upper surface thereof. The solder pads 561 are positioned higher than the top surface of lid 450 so that when optical device package 500 is flipped over for mounting to a circuit board or other type platform the solder balls 561 make contact with corresponding bonding pads on the surface to which the optical device package 500 is mounted.

Because the lid 450 and the substrate together form the hermetic enclosure, as described above, and frame 520 does not form part of the enclosure, frame 520 can possess an open ended U-shaped construction while

still maintaining an hermetically sealed enclosure for the internal components of the optical device package.

Referring now to FIG. 8 a method mounting the optical device package described herein to a circuit board to assemble an electronic circuit is illustrated. The optical device package 100 (or the alternative embodiments described herein) is provided having a patterned array of solder balls 162 disposed on the upper surface of frame 120. A circuit board 600 is provided, the circuit board including a patterned array of bonding pads 601 which is a mirror image of the patterned array of solder balls 162. Conductive lines 603 extend from the individual bonding pads to respective electronic devices 602. The optical device package 100 is inverted as indicated by the arrow A, and positioned such that the individual solder balls 162 are in contact with corresponding individual bonding pads 601. The optical device package 100 is permanently secured to the circuit board by, for example, heating solder balls 162 and bonding pads 601 to a temperature sufficiently high to fuse the solder balls and bonding pads together.

While the above description contains many specifics, these specifics should not be construed as

limitations on the scope of the invention, but merely as exemplifications of preferred embodiments thereof. Those skilled in the art will envision many other possibilities within the scope and spirit of the invention as defined by the claims appended hereto.

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